

Latin America and the Caribbean



Male Toad Mountain harlequin frog (Atelopus certus) in eastern Panama
Brian Gratwicke/Smithsonian Institution



The Latin America and Caribbean region is renowned for its incredible biodiversity. In this part of the Western Hemisphere, an amazing assortment of unique cultures lives in diverse landscapes that range from tropical rainforests to arid deserts, from prairie grasslands to mangrove swamps. These habitats are also home to an array of wildlife including jaguars, maned wolves, macaws, manatees, giant anteaters and countless other species. The broad diversity of wild places and creatures makes Latin America and the Caribbean one of the most environmentally important regions on the planet.

Unfortunately, the landscapes and wildlife of Latin America and the Caribbean are facing a number of serious threats. These include habitat

loss and degradation, invasive species, pollution, over-exploitation, and increasingly, climate change. At the root of most of these threats are social, political, and economic factors including human poverty, population growth, and inadequate policy planning and implementation.

Wide-ranging environmental issues are not constrained by national borders and neither are their solutions. Addressing these problems requires both an international and interdisciplinary effort. The Wildlife Without Borders Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (WWB-LAC) builds on the region's single most valuable natural resource: people. Over the past 30 years, the program has provided critical support to the region's growing efforts to conserve and manage biodiversity.

By supporting human and institutional capacity building, the program strengthens the ability of local people and organizations to manage and conserve species, habitats and ecological processes. It also strives to support conservation training projects that are multi-disciplinary in nature by taking into account the region's social, cultural and economic contexts.

In the coming decade, the WWB-LAC program will build upon its long and successful track record and its commitment to capacity building to achieve solid conservation results in the region. The program is built around three core strategies focused on building the capacity of future conservation leaders through innovative training programs, fostering networks to facilitate learning and collaboration across sites and creating a conservation ethic while changing knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Measuring and evaluating the long-term effectiveness and impact of these conservation investments is also a priority for the WWB-LAC program.

Ultimately, conservation is about people. By engaging, training and empowering new conservation leaders, the WWB-LAC program helps the region's conservation community protect biodiversity for generations to come.



Puppets used as an outreach tool in Rio San Juan, Nicaragua © Jason Houston

The Wildlife Without Borders – Latin America & the Caribbean program has supported conservation projects since 1990. In 2010 the program leveraged over \$2.2 million and funded over \$1.1 million towards 29 projects in countries throughout the region. Projects include:

- Provide training and technical assistance to wardens and community volunteers to establish a comprehensive fire control program to support on-going conservation efforts in the Paraguayan Pantanal Reserve. **In partnership with Asociación Guayra Paraguay.**
- Build local and indigenous conservation management capacity for Peru's Manu National Park by providing a series of workshops to develop and implement an effective biodiversity and ecosystem health monitoring program that will enable park guards to identify conservation successes and threats. **In partnership with the Amazon Conservation Association.**
- Support the establishment of a biological corridor in Panama's Azuero Dry Tropical Forest through community-level training and organizing and policy-oriented research and planning. **In partnership with CONAVI.**
- Ensure the long-term survival of the critically endangered Ricord's iguana (*Cyclura ricordii*) in Haiti and the Dominican Republic by implementing long-term education and awareness programs with local communities. **In partnership with the International Iguana Foundation.**
- Develop a framework for environmental, financial, and social sustainability for the effective management of Belize's Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. **In partnership with the Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development.**
- Employ a multi-pronged communications approach to positively change community knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to climate change and biodiversity conservation across the Caribbean. **In partnership with PCI Media Impact.**
- Support the creation of an indigenous park guard training program in Colombia's Alto Fragua Indi Wasi National Park. **In partnership with the Amazon Conservation Team.**



An ocelot (Leopardus pardalis) in the Yasuni Rainforest, Ecuador.
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Latin America & the Caribbean Program Funding 2006 to 2010	
Total Number of Grants Awarded	161
Total Funds Distributed Through Grants	\$4,305,000
Total Partner Contributions Leveraged by Grants	\$11,601,000
Total Number of Countries that Received Program Support	22

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Guatemalan woman and child prepare to plant native seedlings.
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